

SCALE HOW,  
AMBLESIDE.

DEAR EDITOR,—

So much has happened in the Christmas term that it is hard to know where to begin. We came back on September 30th. We were all so very glad to see Miss Mason again after her long absence. We only wish that she were stronger and could be more with us, though it is very nice even to feel her presence in the house throughout the term. To the seniors the time flies very quickly—there seems so much to be done during the last term. This year, in addition to our old friends, "Quick" and "Rooper," we have been studying an abridged translation of *Emile*. Some of us who have been to France had already dipped into the original, but we find these extracts much more convenient for educational purposes. We were given the books to study by ourselves, so that discussions occasionally arose among us as to what we should accept and what reject, although finally we found ourselves pretty well agreed in our verdict as to the merits and limitations of Jean Jaques. In Nature work the fashion has been for fungi, their lovely colours and quaint shapes proving sufficiently alluring to counteract the difficulty of identifying them by their names. Two or three of the juniors are most ardent fungi collectors. They always go out armed with vasculums, which they soon fill, and return to become centres of attraction to other students, to whom these fungi authorities, being blessed with memories, are able to supply names in length not less than a yard, and generally in inverse proportion to the size of the fungus they denote.

A newly-introduced Scale How handicraft is rug making by means of a most picturesque and fascinating hand loom. Miss Hodgson has given both seniors and juniors lessons on its manipulation, and even Miss Williams and Mr. Rooper were not exempt. The frames are neither cumbersome nor expensive, and putting in the stitches has an irresistible fascination for most people. The work is done from the front of the frame, so that its progress can be watched.

The seniors are so glad to hear of new handicrafts to which they will be able to introduce their pupils. Leather work seems to be the prime favourite with this year's as with last year's seniors.

The school-girls now live at Chapel House, close to St. Anne's Church, where they all seem very cosy. Hilda Thomas left us in the summer, and Nellie Clendinnen and Kathleen Persse are leaving at Christmas, so the practising school will see great changes. We had a new little girl, Janet, among the wees this term, and a younger sister of the Clendinnens coming next term will help to fill up the gaps left in the school, and will, we are sure, live up to family traditions. The girls gave us all the most delightful entertainment at the children's party. They got up a "Toy Symphony," in which most of the performers represented birds. We had the nightingale, whose song was produced by blowing into water through a tube; the owl and the cuckoo among others. All the instruments, from the tambourine to the penny whistle, were toys. The symphony was preceded by a varied selection of songs and recitations, and the whole thing went with a swing and briskness that was really refreshing. We have had two entertainments from the juniors—one to celebrate the half-term and another at the end of the term. The first was entitled "Triennial Meeting of the Handicraft Club." Each handicraft had its representative—Miss Sloyd went about with a steel angle, testing people's skirts, and finding them five centimetres off the straight, and Bigee Washee, a Chinaman, had to be frequently silenced by the chairman, who, resplendent in basket-work and chair-caning strands, presided over the ceremonies. The principal features of the breaking-up entertainment were the pretty Swedish dances, imported direct from Sweden, and introduced in the setting of "A Swedish Peasant Play." Waxworks formed a second item of the programme, and we were surprised to find a wonderful likeness in two Scale How students to Mr. Chamberlain and President Kruger respectively.

Last, but not least, we had our usual visit from Mr. Rooper, who arrived on December 7th. We gave our final criticism lessons on Thursday morning, and Mr. Rooper listened as sympathetically as ever. On Thursday evening the juniors entertained us all with a French play, and Mr.



Rooper stayed until the middle of the day on Friday. A new feature was added to his annual visit which was both interesting and suggestive to all of us. One of the juniors gave a history lesson to Class II. by special request of Mr. Rooper, who wished to hear one of our usual criticism lessons. The subject was Henry IV. Mr. Rooper did not ask us for verbal criticisms only, but suggested that some of us should illustrate the way in which we should have treated the same subject. Four other lessons were accordingly given, and we were certainly surprised to see from what different standpoints the same subjects could be approached. The idea is most suggestive as showing how monotony and sameness may be avoided and variety introduced in teaching. Mr. Rooper gave us a most interesting little resumé of the way in which he had once treated the same subject, pointing out the importance of the picturesque element in history lessons to little children.

Ambleside has been "speeding its parting guests," but looking more beautiful than ever in the snow. We have been trying to take "mental pictures" of Loughrigg on these clear moonlight nights, as it looms behind the frosted and glistening trees. We shall indeed have pleasant memories of its beauty at all seasons, now that the time has come to say good-bye.

With best Christmas wishes from

THE STUDENTS.

Oct. 10th, 1899.

DEAR EDITOR,

I think ex-students may be interested in the following account of the National Home Reading Union taken from *Literature*. I think it would be very helpful to any who wish to go through regular courses of reading, and cannot give up as much time as is required by the "College by Post."

"Although this excellent organization has completed the tenth year of its existence, it is less well known than it deserves to be. It may be regarded as an intellectual mission. To name the scholars who during the past ten years have helped to draw up its 'book list' and to conduct its courses is to name many of our most eminent teachers in literature, history, art, and science. This service has been the free gift of the learned to those who are less happily endowed. The small subscription paid by reading members does not defray the cost of printing the magazines and the inevitable office expenses of the Home Reading Union. For a small fee, varying from one shilling to three shillings and sixpence per annum, according to the course of study which he pursues, each member is provided with a list of the best books in his particular subject, a monthly magazine containing what may be described as a collection of printed lectures, the opportunity of submitting essays for criticism, and demanding the explanation of difficulties, as well as numerous minor aids to study.

"In the selection of books for the members of the National Home Reading Union circumstances impose inevitable restrictions. One of the first requisites in the books which they are expected to possess is, necessarily, cheapness; and the Union, thanks to the kindly co-operation of several firms of publishers, has secured many cheap editions of books which, although recognized as suitable for large numbers of readers, had been obtainable hitherto only at a considerable cost. Another important qualification, considering the standard of culture of the majority of the members of the National Home Reading Union, is that the books should be attractive in style. It is a